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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Highway Travel, Moscow to Zagorsk/Railway Travel, Moscow to Leningrad, Kiev to Kharkov, Sukhumi to Tbilisi/New Construction

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1. Q. Describe any roads on which you had occasion to drive.
 - A. I drove from Moscow to Zagorsk to visit the religious seminary there. I was accompanied by an interpreter and a Soviet driver. The distance was approximately 60 kilometers and the road seemed to be black-topped about two-thirds of the way although it was difficult to tell because of packed snow. The road is three or four lanes wide for four or five miles out of Moscow and then two lane for probably 35-40 miles. I noticed a very great deal of truck traffic but no more than 15-20 automobiles, both going and coming. There was one long bridge, rather close to Moscow which was 4-6 lanes wide and which spanned some railroad tracks, as I recall.
2. Q. Describe the condition of the railroads on which you traveled.
 - A. Moscow to Leningrad: This trip was mainly at night and I can recall very little about the road. I believe that the entire length was double-tracked. We had a steam engine of very ancient vintage but fairly modern coaches. We had our own compartment and were quite comfortable.

Kiev to Kharkov: This was also a night trip. We had a compartment with four bunks and a soldier and our interpreter, a woman, stayed with us. This caused some consternation on our part but didn't seem to bother the soldier or anyone else. The road was double-tracked and we had a very slow steam engine which averaged about 25-35 miles per hour. This seems to be about average speed for all their trains.

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Sukhumi to Tbilisi: This is a double-track route which parallels the Black Sea for a good deal of its length. Our coach had been built in 1903 but there were newer coaches on the train. This again was a night trip.

3. Q. Did you observe any new construction of canals, dams, power-lines or pipe-lines?

A. No, I did not. However, in Tbilisi we were told that a new water supply pipe-line was being built and that it would increase the supply of electricity for the city. I saw a tremendous amount of miscellaneous building going on. Their construction looks pretty bad, though. I'm no expert, but they seem to be throwing up their buildings without worrying whether they'll last or not. They don't seem to tuck-point the bricks and the buildings which aren't covered by stucco look pretty awful. I don't see how they can last more than 15-20 years.

4. Q. Can you describe any military installations or airfields?

A. On the way from the Tbilisi airport to the town we passed through what looked like a military camp. We saw troops firing on a range and quite a few more drilling and riding in trucks. For some reason we saw almost no troops on the streets in Tbilisi.

Their air strips seem to double as military installations. I saw lots of two-engine bombers. They looked like B-29s but were closer to a B-17 in size. There were a lot of fighters at Kharkov. They looked like Migs but evidently were not. At Sukhumi I saw a twin engine, twin fuselage fighter, something like a P-38. I wasn't close enough to tell whether it was a jet. I saw only one jet in the air, very high over Sukhumi.

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